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Planning the Future of the Asian City

A Twenty-five Year Retrospective

香港亞太研究所

Norton Ginsburg

Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies
The Chinese University of Hong Kong
Shatin, New Territories
Hong Kong

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About the author

Norton Ginsburg is Professor Emeritus of Geography at the University of Chicago and Director Emeritus of the Environment and Policy Institute at the East-West Center.

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Abstract

As its title implies, this paper represents a quarter-century retrospective on the contents of a paper presented originally at a conference in Hong Kong in 1969 and then published in 1972. Following the thrust of argument in the conference papers, the importance of urbanization as a major force in modernization was underscored, as was the crucial role of the great cities in Asia as "engines of growth," a view not popular at the time. It also was argued that planning for Asian urbanization in Asia required concern not only with the central cities, but also with their hinterlands with which, it was proposed, they were becoming increasingly integrated. These arguments have stood up well in the ensuing twenty-five years, and the interaction between large city and hinterland has been vastly extended, the result being the emergence of what has been termed "the extended or dispersed metropolis," a phenomenon apparently unique to Asia and a product of accelerated economic development there. Some suggestions for further research are then proposed.

In June of 1969, a remarkable conference on "The City as a Center of Change" was held at the University of Hong Kong. It was remarkable in a number of respects, not least because the quality of the papers was uniformly high, because the two dozen or so participants were excellent communicants, because three years later a fine volume of papers, *The City as a Centre of Change in Asia*, under the able editorship of Professor D.J. Dwyer, was produced — the last paper of which was the title of this retrospective, of which more below — and because a basis was provided for continuing communication among the participants in the ensuing years. All this was both true and admirable.

What was even more remarkable, however, was a consensus among the conference participants that urbanization was both a concomitant of, and, arguably, a necessary precondition for modernization however defined and, indeed, for development. Since this is now so much of the current received wisdom, it may seem strange to underscore it. But, at the time of the conference and for some years thereafter, at least through the 1970's, the literature on urbanization and urban policy, both in Asia and elsewhere, displayed a marked anti-urban bias. It was argued that cities were tolerable or at least unavoidable, but small was more beautiful than large, and the great cities were undesirable, anti-social evils which probably were also anti-developmental. This was a time, too, when the Maoist efforts to "control" the great cities in China and slow their growth were admired as a model for all developing countries, and not only in Asia.

Therefore, encourage growth poles in rural areas, develop medium-sized and smaller towns, facilitate "counter urbanization," and focus development policies on rural areas so that people would be kept down on the farm and in the village instead of seeking greater opportunities in the cities. This point of view was rejected in the Hong Kong conference, as by chance, it also had recently been rejected by the participants in the "Pacific Conference on Urban Growth" held in Honolulu in May 1967 under the auspices of the East-West Center with the support of the Department of Housing and Urban Development and Agency for International Development, the two American government agencies then most concerned with development policies and prospects. A few quotations from the report of that conference entitled "The New Urban Debate," might be in order.

> Through concentration and specialization of labor the city promotes the accumulation and distribution of capital. It is identified with the growth of financial institutions and the development of entrepreneurial and managerial ability.
>
> The city reaches into its hinterland for labor supply, for raw materials, and for provisions. But it returns manifold benefits to the rural areas. It is a major consumer of agricultural produce. It manufactures goods needed by rural consumers. When it reaches a kind of take-off stage in its own development, the city will provide jobs for surplus agricultural laborers, and even though they may be low-paying jobs, they nonetheless mean higher incomes for rural migrants....
>
> In addition to the crucial roles they play in national economic development, cities in newly developing countries perform important social functions both for their inhabitants and for the nation. Civilization has flourished in the cities. The city is a theater of change, the theater for modernization in every aspect of life. The process of city development encourages innovation in all fields. Since the beginning of urban life, cities have been the repository and generator of major expressions of human creativity. [From *The New Urban Debate: A Conference Report*, pp.21-22. (Washington, D.C.: Agency for International Development, 1968)].

It is no mere coincidence that these propositions and other similar ones that were generated at the "Pacific Conference on Urban Growth" should have found echo in the findings of the Hong Kong Conference of 1969, since there was some overlap of participants, and the author of the essay in the Hong Kong Conference volume on "The Future of the Asian City" was one of the drafters of the earlier report. Still, in retrospect, it is astonishing that the anti-urban bias of planners, some scholars, and many government officials continued so strong for so long, despite apparent grounds for discrediting it. No doubt compassion for the plight of the poor in the slums of most larger cities was a significant factor, but most important was a lack of understanding of what the city is about and how it might be related to hinterlands, regions, and the nation-state.

Be that as it may, few would now dispute a major thesis in the essay referred to above that the city, even more in Asia perhaps than elsewhere, is a major vehicle for modernization and that modernization is associated in turn with development, with increase in regional and national product, and with those kinds of societal changes that encourage the cultivation of new ideas and the incorporation into the political economy of methods for in-

creasing productivity, leading thereby to greater wealth on the whole for entire societies, despite much maldistribution of it.[1] Moreover, at least in Asia, cities clearly have been playing the role of "catalysts for modernization," to borrow a phrase used by Y.M. Yeung and X.W. Hu in their valuable book: *China's Coastal Cities: Catalysts for Modernization* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1992).

It is appropriate at this point to define what is and has been meant by "Asia" in these contexts. The term does nót refer to all of the physical continent of Asia. What the region consists of are the southern and eastern rimlands of that continent, to the exclusion of the territories of the former Soviet Union and Southwest Asia, which is regarded, properly, as part of the Middle East. In short, "Asia" consists of the great realm extending from Pakistan to and including Japan, to which, in some other literature, the terms "Asiatic Triangle" and "Asian Asia" have been applied. Currently, there is some interest in the eventual inclusion in the region of the Central Asian republics of the former Soviet Union, and in time this might come about.

Currently, Asia includes slightly more than half the world's population. In 1969, it was estimated to include about 40 per cent of the world's urban population, and it was predicted that by the 1990's that percentage would rise to 50 per cent. This indeed has been the case. In most Asian countries, the recent growth rate of urban population is twice that of over-all population. In the case of Indonesia, for example, recent over-all population growth has been estimated at 2.1 per cent, whereas the urban population has been increasing at a rate of 4.8 per cent annually. To be sure, differences from country to country in the definition of cities and gaps in census materials make such data questionable on a regional basis, but the basic principle is certain to hold. Moreover, it seems likely that by the turn of the century, thirteen of the thirty largest cities in the world according to the U.N. will be Asian. These will include, *inter alia*, Tokyo, Seoul, Beijing, Shanghai, Manila, Jakarta, Calcutta, Delhi, and Bombay, with Guangzhou, Bangkok, Dacca, and Karachi not all that far behind. In all, however, the urbanization level in Asian countries averages out to about 30 per cent, but it is expected to increase to at least 38 per cent by century's end. One implication of these data is the fact that most of Asia's peoples still are non-urban, at least in official terms, and that condition will continue for many years. This fact has relevance to the discussion that follows about the space-societies and space-polities within which Asia's cities are imbedded, since cities do not exist on their own, so to speak, but come into being and continue to perform functions for the societies of which they are a part.

In the essay under review much attention was given to the fact the most societies, economies, and polities in Asia have been characterized by a remarkable dualism, or even pluralism, which bear upon the spatial organization of the countries involved. This condition has historically been most characteristic of Southeast Asia, and, indeed, it was in that region that J.H. Boeke and J.S. Furnivall developed their dualism/pluralism theses. That the expansion of Europe and particularly colonialism were responsible for this condition is widely accepted. Most of the larger cities in Southeast Asia were coastal or near-coastal, and were developed either under a colonial power or under major foreign influence. Such cities acted as points of connectivity with the outside world, and the port function tended to dominate. But they also were well connected with those areas in their hinterlands which produced products desired abroad and developed under the direction of the colonial administration — e.g., sugar, rubber, spices, minerals, timber. These products for the most part were produced in enclaves functionally distinct from indigenous areas of rural occupance, which contained most of the areas' occupants who for the most part were engaged in agriculture producing food for local consumption. To a considerable degree, this was the case also in India under British rule. In East Asia, the pattern differed markedly, particularly in Japan even as modernization proceeded there. In China, with a long history of indigenous urbanization, some elements of the pattern appeared in the form of the so-called Treaty Ports and the specialized activities associated with them,

such as British-promoted tobacco products for export in Shandong province.

The coastal cities themselves, like most cities, contained diversified populations, many drawn as in the cases of India and China from other parts of the country, and even more, in the case of Southeast Asia, from abroad. Thus, the growing cities of Southeast Asia even in terms of resident populations seemed to be foreign enclaves rather than domestic ones. In Malaya, for example, the majority populations in the burgeoning cities such as Singapore and Kuala Lumpur were Chinese, with substantial Indian minorities, the consequence in large part of the importation of Chinese and Indian labor to staff the colonial enterprises whether urban- or rural-based. Thus, a dichotomy developed within both the newly independent and the older countries in Asia, as between the "traditional" or rural and what might be thought of as the "modern" or urban sectors of society.

This dichotomous condition assumed different forms in different places. Widespread in Southeast Asia, the division between "indigenous" and "foreign" assumed different forms even there. In Thailand, for example, Bangkok developed as an indigenous administrative center, but its ever-growing Chinese population, soon a majority, performed major commercial functions with overseas connections, as in the marketing of rice, as well as rubber and teak. In India, with a long tradition of urbanism, an urban hierarchy had long existed, based largely on the administrative function, but under British rule the commercial function became increasingly important and tended to be concentrated in relatively few urban places. The British also established a national capital, New Delhi, juxtaposed with an older urban form, Old Delhi, but the engines of growth resided largely in cities like Calcutta and Bombay which were if not foreign, then as least foreign-stimulated, metropolises. In these cases, even as late as the time of the Hong Kong conference, the divide between rural and urban was sharply incised in the landscape. When one moved to and beyond the limits of Delhi, for example, it was into another world, a rural, agriculturally based village world, with few connections with the

city itself. That was the case also in Calcutta, Bangkok, Rangoon, Jakarta, and Manila among others.

Although the over-all situation in China differed, given the long history of indigenous urbanism there, the boundaries between Treaty Port and immediate hinterland also were sharply drawn. Even in Japan under modernization, the contrast appeared. It is worth noting, however, that latterly, Japanese imperial domination over Korea and Taiwan had much the same effect as colonialism elsewhere. As in India, one might find there an old city, a foreign residential enclave, a traditional market area, a more modern shopping district, a military cantonment, etc., what has been termed, with regard particularly to India, a "collection of period pieces."

Throughout Asia, then, a common problem of integrating the elements of the dichotomy has continued to be a major problem in nation-building; and twenty-five years ago, although much progress seemed under way, it continued to loom large in the formulation of national development policies. That problem continues to be a major one, but in the quarter century since then a reconciliation of opposites has been transforming functionally divided systems into much more nearly integrated ones. In Japan, the integration progress has been largely completed. In China, there has been much progress. Elsewhere in Asia too, integration has proceeded at an impressive rate. What have been some of the forces and trends at work in this transformation, various though it might be from country to country?

Before attempting to answer this question, a major geographical feature of most Asian countries needs to be restated: that is, most of the cities in Asia are located in areas where most of the people are. To be sure, there are exceptions, as in Malaysia, but for the most part cities and over-all populations have been in marked propinquity. This is not because most of the populations reside in cities, even large ones, but because Asian populations tend to be highly concentrated in limited areas with high rural densities and labor forces engaged in what has been until recently largely subsistence agriculture, in which the cultivation of wet-rice on al-

luvial lowlands has loomed large if not dominated. In short, Asian cities have been developing in areas of already dense populations, even though these rural areas might have been poorly linked to the cities themselves. This juxtaposition of rural and urban, despite their functional separateness, has been a major factor in the development of linkages between cities and countrysides and in the reconciliation of opposites to which reference has just been made. Indeed, as the cities have, within the past two or three decades, expanded and developed labor-seeking industries, the surrounding areas have become a major source of labor both for those industries and for the services spun off from them and the higher incomes they have come to represent. This development is a major fact in the growth of the larger cities, needless to say, although it should be noted again that their growth also is due to natural reproduction, since, despite some evidence to the contrary, the urban environments are more benign and provocative of longevity than those in the countryside.

In any event, the cities have become the targets of massive immigration from rural areas, as migrants move uphill, that is, up the gradient of actual or perceived incomes. This was the case earlier in Japan. It is the case now with regard to almost all cities in Asia. And, as agricultural methods in the countryside improve, whether through mechanization or the introduction of new grain varieties, etc., the likelihood of surplus labor in large numbers moving into the cities is certain.

In any event, city and country have been becoming increasingly interlocked, and the widespread dualism of the past has much diminished, though it still remains a major issue. For the most part, however, it is the remote peripheral areas of given countries that have remained isolated, and their incorporation into national spatial systems seems far off. But to repeat, what forces have been at work in promoting integration between the expanding urban centers and their immediate hinterlands?

First, the fact that in-migration has been so large for so long means that ever larger numbers of urban dwellers have and, it is believed, maintain relationships with their traditional villages.

These relationship include various forms of monetary and other remittances, but, as seems possible, they also include visits in both directions by the people concerned.

Second, a transportation and communications revolution has been taking place in most Asian countries in recent decades. This was apparent twenty-five years ago, but its impact has increased impressively since then. Some of the implications of this revolution, as well as its nature, are spelled out in the book edited by N. Ginsburg, B. Koppel, and T.G. McGee, *The Extended Metropolis: The Settlement Transition in Asia* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1991), especially in the three general chapters authored by the editors, but also in several case studies of several Asian countries.

On the communication front, regional integration of rural and urban has been encouraged by the almost universal reach of radio broadcasting, chiefly from the larger cities, and to a lesser degree within a more limited range by the impact of television. This outreach has made life in villages and small towns within, say, a 200-kilometer range of the larger cities more urbane. Acculturation therefore has been proceeding as urban ways of life have become more familiar to village residents. Almost perversely, these developments seem **not** to have stimulated more rural-urban migration. Rather, they appear to have slowed it down somewhat, although demographic evidence remains sparse. In any case, it seems plausible that the communications transformation in most countries helps prepare rural dwellers for an urban way of life, should they decide to migrate.

The impact of the so-called transportation revolution may be even more readily demonstrable. It has been associated with what might be termed "low-tech" rather than "high-tech" innovations. There are no "maglev" phenomena here. Rather, there has been a phenomenal increase and extension of bus services in metropolitan hinterlands. Twenty-five years ago, the bus terminals in New Delhi were served only by a few services reaching out into the countryside more than a few miles. Since then, those terminals have been crowded with vehicles and passengers in

large numbers moving to and from the city. This has been the case in almost every country in Asia in recent years, despite the fact that rural road improvements have not over-all kept pace with the intensity of their use. It is of no small importance that these bus services permit commuting over considerable areas, and the labor needs in the cities as industry and service employment has expanded are met in substantial part through commutation. Moreover, the rapid development of air transport serving the larger cities in Asia has resulted in "urbanized corridors" connecting central city with airports, as in the case of the developments between Bangkok and Don Muang airport, which also is a major focus for the location of industries outside of the central city.

These developments have been reinforced by a truly remarkable increase in wheeled vehicles available to almost all within the urban hinterlands and even beyond them. Bicycles have long played an important role in facilitating movement and interaction, but within the last three decades or so the population of motorized vehicles — motorcycles, mopeds, etc., has enormously increased. Also, more small-town residents, and even villages, have been able to obtain four-wheeled vehicles chiefly in the form of small trucks. A consequence is an almost continuous ebb and flow of people, and to a degree goods, between cities and their hinterlands.

Third, reference already has been made to the remarkable rapid expansion of industry in the major cities in recent decades, which constitutes a third factor in the evolution of extended metropolitan systems, since that industry provides employment for ever larger labor forces from both within and without the central cities themselves. Even more, to a remarkable degree urban-centered industries have spread their influence over large areas and into small towns and even villages scores of miles away from the central city. Although this phenomenon is found in almost every country to a greater or lesser degree, it is perhaps most clearly developed in China where non-agricultural sources of income have come to dominate even in many villages. To illustrate, bicycle wheel spokes may be plated and trimmed in a

small town some fifty miles from Shanghai, and then sent to a plant in that city for assembly along with other parts that may have been processed in some other towns.

In the Chinese case, the village-related landscape appears relatively unchanged from what it had been a quarter of a century ago: villages surrounded by paddy and vegetable fields, with a sprinkling of what appear to be traditional market towns. However, those towns increasingly often offer employment in industries of the sort described above. In a typical village, then, the older members of a family will be engaged in paddy cultivation, but another member will commute, by bicycle or moped to employment in the town, another might commute by bus to the central city itself or attend higher school there, even as another family member might have migrated to the city and become a source of remittances to the family's income. In short, the family unit has become increasingly urbanized even though its primary locus may remain in the village or perhaps the small provincial town.

The increasing integration of city and country within a limited but extensive hinterland of the cities has been disrupted in at least one respect, again particularly in China. Historically, a rural-urban symbiosis was expressed through the import of foodstuffs and some raw materials, e.g. bamboo, to the cities on the one hand, and the export of nightsoil and other waste from the cities to the countryside where it became an essential contribution to continuing soil fertility. With increasing size of city populations and industrialization, the volume and character of urban waste has been transformed. More solid matter is involved, some of it toxic, and alternative destinations have had to be found in the form of landfills, some of them considerable distances from the cities. This situation is documented in a thoughtful and informative chapter in *The Extended Metropolis* volume by Joseph Whitney: "The Waste Economy and the Dispersed Metropolis in China," pp. 177-92. To a considerable degree, this problem has been dealt with moderately effectively in Japan where nightsoil continues to be gathered regularly, as separate from other waste, and turned to the

countryside, but this procedure is costly and demands efficient organization. For this reason, it is unlikely that it will evolve effectively in China or in other countries as the problem of waste disposal increases. In the Chinese case, commercial fertilizers, government-subsidized, have replaced urban-based nightsoil, with consequent impacts, mostly negative, on rural environments.

In any case, what appears to have been evolving are extended and dispersed metropolitan regions encompassing hinterlands of perhaps 200-mile distance from the central cities and incorporating hundreds of villages and scores of what have become increasingly satellite towns. One of the consequences has been a slowing down of the intensity of in-migration to the central cities. This prospect was not clearly foreseen in 1969, which assumed that the rates of immigration would continue to increase, but then it was not clear that the evolution of industrial employment would assume the forms it has.

The situation in India illustrates these propositions. Following Chakraborty, it appears that for some years now both the urban and the periurban populations in India have been increasing at rates roughly twice that of the population as a whole. The Census of India has, since 1971, recognized the existence of "urban agglomerations" consisting of central cities and multi-nodal periurban areas. These are believed to have long accounted for half of India's urban population, and they certainly have assumed a higher percentage than that at present. The Census also has designated some of the most densely settled core area of the urban agglomerations as "metropolitan cities," of which there were twelve in 1981 and another dozen waiting in the wings so to speak. The outer portions of these entities, it should be noted, have been growing more rapidly than the central municipalities themselves, although these have been growing rapidly as well.

It may be well here to summarize a description of these regional spatial entities wherever they occur in Asia, at the risk of some repetition. Although it may appear pretentious to quote from one's previous writings, the Preface to the volume, *The Extended Metropolis*, does it so well and succinctly that the pretentiousness might be forgiven. The settlement systems under review here:

> involve complex and compound regional systems consisting of central cities, fringe areas of those cities, exurbs, satellite towns, and extensive intervening areas of dense populations and intensive traditional agricultural land uses in which paddy cultivation tends to dominate.
>
> What happens in these extensive intervening areas is of particular interest in differentiating the phenomenon under discussion from the situation in most other developing areas. Their landscapes closely resemble those of decades and even generations ago. Most people live in villages, usually agglomerated, and almost all the land is under cultivation. Sources of family income, however, are different. For the most part, although income from agriculture continues to be an important element in family income structure, its significance has been much reduced to the point where, for any given family, most income comes from non-agricultural sources. Village and small-town industries, usually linked with larger enterprise in central cities and satellite towns, provide employment and income for some family members whose involvement in agriculture may be limited to helping out the elderly mainstays of the agricultural labor force at times of planting or harvesting. Other family members may work in the central cities themselves, commuting by bus, moped, or even bicycle, depending on the distance from their rural residences. Others might actually be living in the cities and satellites, and remitting portions of their salaries to the family. Agricultural production itself frequently shifts from a subsistence mode to an increasing emphasis on higher value products designed for... urban markets — vegetables, fruits, tobacco, fibers, milk, eggs, poultry, and meat products. Further integration of rural and urban areas may result if some younger family members attend schools in towns and cities. The entire system is made possible by a "transportation revolution"... involving improved all-weather roads and simple vehicles that use them, possibly canals... or commuter railroads as in the vicinity of Calcutta.
>
> The idea of new zones of [extended] interaction... evolved from a long history of reflection, contemplation, dialogue, and systematic research on the processes by which settle-

ment patterns and structures in Asia have been modified and even transformed.

Despite a history of bias against urbanization in the literature, especially focussed on the presumed undesirability of large cities, as noted earlier, the late 1960's saw the two major conferences cited above, which did much to counter the bias and to think through what urbanization in Asia was about. One of these, to repeat, was the "Pacific Conference on Urban Growth" held in Honolulu in 1967, the conclusion of which, *inter alia*, was that cities, particularly the large ones, act as "engines for growth," and that governments, rather than seeking to curb and "control" them should direct their efforts to make cities work more efficiently and to positively affect the lives of more, rather than fewer, people.

Two years later the second conference took place, this time in Hong Kong, out of which came the volume *The City as a Centre of Change in Asia*, the last chapter of which dealt with the problems and prospects of planning the future of the Asian city. What has happened since then is a gradual, then accelerated, concentration of research on Asian urbanization leading to the concept, among others, of the "extended metropolis" and the formulation of policy recommendation that might lead to their enhancement and greater effectiveness in spreading the effects of economic development to ever larger proportions of the populations in Asian countries. Indeed, it is not unreasonable to assume that half the **total** populations of almost all countries in Asia are thus affected. This is less because of consistently defined government policies toward cities, though the anti-urban bias of the 1960's and 1970's has almost disappeared, than because of what appears to be a "natural order" of things, whereby more and more people in the extended hinterlands of the great cities have come to experience the practical benefits of urbanization, even though they might not be living in the central cities themselves or in larger satellite towns.

This is not to say that the larger cities are without grievous problems of mass poverty which is endemic in all the cities of

developing Asian countries, in spite of the fact that per capita incomes in those cities are believed to be several times greater than in rural areas, in the case of China some six times as great. Very larger numbers of people, many of whom are as yet only becoming urbanized, are jammed together in slums where amenities are of a most primitive nature. Housing provision is a crucial issue in almost all of the larger cities, and urban governments are hard-pressed to deal with it, given shortages both in capital for housing development and managerial expertise in dealing with the problem. Over thirty years ago, the Calcutta Metropolitan Planning Organization devised a program for self-help in housing provision based upon preliminary site preparation by government agencies. This program worked at best only moderately well especially given uncertainties as to land and property ownership, but it appears to have been a step in the right direction.

Even more pressing in many respects than the provision of housing is that of providing that kind of infrastructure which will not only make cities function more effectively but which also are preconditions for continued investment both domestic and foreign. Water supply is a major problem even in countries with high precipitation, and sewage and waste disposal, as Whitney has argued, are serious issues apparent even to the most casual observer. Nonetheless, it is a remarkable fact that mortality rates in the cities are considerably lower than those in the countryside, and they continue to fall. Power shortages, however, are almost universal, although they are least serious in the cities of NIE's. It is often alleged that the problems of Calcutta, for example, are less those of employment for a rapidly growing population, housing, and the provision of amenities, than of providing enough and steady sources of energy, presumably electrical, to eliminate brownouts and the suspension of industrial activities whenever they might occur.

Moreover, the spatial structures of most such cities are such as to hamper internal communication and circulation. Most streets are narrow, and traffic congestion, even in the poorer cities, is a

serious and conspicuous handicap to further development. The traffic jams of Bangkok, to be sure a relatively prosperous metropolis, are notorious, and they are serious in most other cities in the region, given the remarkable growth in numbers of wheeled vehicles of all sorts.

It seems certain that these kinds of problems can be ameliorated over time, but in most cases only slowly, and everywhere government planning policies need to be directed toward their solution. It follows that the long-standing anti-urban policies of many governments, as was the case in China, need to be further transformed, if cities are to operate more efficiently in performing the functions that are necessary if they are to act as "engines of growth." Thus, although the argument is being made here that **urban planning** must become **extended metropolitan planning** in the interests of economic growth and the enhancement of quality of life in the countries concerned, the central cities themselves require intensive and positive attention, and this requires in turn the recognition by governments at all levels of the essential roles that cities play in regional and national development.

To be sure, the importance of the great cities is being recognized by planners and policy makers in almost all countries in Asia, but this does not mean that the various internal urban problems will be readily solved even when the motivation is there and investment is a possibility. Water supply is a case in point. It is a truism that water is the staff of life for urban systems, even more, arguably, than energy, housing, internal transportation, and the like. Yet, most cities in Asian Asia, even in Japan to some extent, suffer from periodic shortages of water. Why is this so? A basic reason is the fact that almost all of Asia is subject to a monsoonal climatic regime. In simple language, this means the existence of a wet season during the summer half year and a dry season during the winter half year. In the Asian interior, to be sure, aridity is perennial, but it is seasonally limited even in the coastal areas which are of the greatest concern to us here. It is understandable therefore that even in the comparatively well-

watered lower latitudinal riverine flood plains, seasonal water shortages might occur. These shortages are not simply a reflection of greater water demand in the cities during the summer months, though this is the case. More important, it reflects much greater demand in the non-urban hinterland for irrigation water during the dry season. Historically, and even largely at present, agriculture in the alluvial lowlands adjoining the larger cities has been characterized by heavy reliance on single-cropped wet-paddy grown during the summer monsoon period. As agriculture has been becoming "modernized," and particularly as world rice prices have risen, much effort is being expended on raising a second crop, as has been done for generations in southern China, though not in South and Southeast Asia. The resulting impact on urban water supplies has been, surprisingly, immense.

The problem is a severe one, for example, in Bangkok where both rural and urban water demands have been escalating. There, not only surface water supplies are involved. Groundwater sources have become heavily depleted, and government is seeking ways to control withdrawals. But the practical as well as economic and political costs are formidable, and dam construction, sadly, has come to be looked askance at by international funding agencies.

In any event, a basic principle is that the essential nature of the problem needs to be understood before solutions can be devised. The proposition is illustrated by the water supply situation in the North Chinese municipalities of Beijing and Tianjin. These are, of course, located in northern China where annual rainfall, though subject to a monsoon regime, is scarce overall, in the vicinity of 20-25 inches. It should be noted that these two cities are provincial-level administrative entities which include sizable hinterlands beyond the central cities with populations roughly equal to those in the cities themselves. The populations are engaged primarily in agriculture, although, in keeping with the model of the extended metropolis described above, many commute to the nearest town or to the central cities themselves, and others are employed in small-town based manufactural activities which provide ever-in-

creasing proportions of family incomes. [For a detailed discussion of this topic, see chapter 3, "Peking and Tientsin: The Problem of Water Supply," in N. Ginsburg, *The Urban Transition* (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 1990)].

In 1989, a delegation of engineers from the Beijing Municipality visited the East-West Center in Honolulu and sought advice on solving the chronic water shortage in the central city which had doubled its population in a 20-year period and became the locus for a number of industries. The perspective was on the central city itself, and this turned out to be a serious error. In the broader Municipality, agricultural water consumption had quintupled during that period, chiefly drawn from ever deeper wells which were seriously depleting the groundwater resources of the area. Thus, in the municipality as a whole, agriculture was accounting for two-thirds of the total water consumption, whereas industrial consumption accounted for 23 per cent and domestic consumption for only 11 per cent. The urban water demand itself was satisfied, barely, from some eighty dams and reservoirs some distance from the city; groundwater was committed to agriculture. Overall, the largest amounts of water consumed in the Municipality were committed to the irrigation of relatively low-value crops like winter wheat, summer maize, and wet-paddy. Until the 1960's, maize had been grown as an unirrigated summer crop and winter wheat (and *kao liang*) as an unirrigated winter crop where feasible. Virtually no rice at all was grown. What had then happened? The answer was the imposition of the Maoist doctrine of local self-sufficiency in foodstuffs and a corresponding encouragement of double-cropping involving intensive irrigation where irrigation had been little employed before, and with water as a free good.

The visiting engineers were interested primarily in techniques for recycling water in factories and in other water conservation measures in city homes and offices. The agricultural dimension was beyond their purview, and, indeed, they were astonished to learn that solutions to the urban water supply problem clearly reside in the agricultural sector and a shift away from irrigated

and multiple-cropping. So far as is known, some measures have since been taken to divert water from agricultural uses to urban ones, and to develop means for assigning some changes to water use, though serious shortages recur especially during the dry winter months, and the basic problem remains unresolved.

The moral of this story is that solution to urban problems requires careful consideration of the nature and contexts of those problems. Moreover, those, like water supply, require consideration of the rural side of the urban-rural coin and the devising of solutions that take both urban and rural circumstances into account. Dealing solely with the built-up areas of the cities can yield only partial solutions.

Thus, we return to the proposition underscored in the 1969 paper under discussion, that planning for the cities under change in Asia and for the people who will be immediately affected by them requires consideration not only of the central city and its characteristics and problems, but also of the hinterland that is a functional extension of it. But whereas twenty-five years ago such a proposition seemed sensible and even admirable, action on it did not necessarily seem pressing, let alone essential, albeit desirable. What has happened in a quarter of a century is to elevate the need for planning and action regarding the extended and dispersed metropolitan areas to a policy imperative. These remarkable regional entities have come into being through an as yet little researched natural process which has fundamentally altered the geographies of most Asian countries already, and which is likely to alter them even more in the future.

As a consequence, it is incumbent upon governments in the countries of Asia to reconsider the conventional proposition that all areas in them are of equal value and therefore are deserving of equal investment and support. So far as one can tell, only the Chinese historically placed differential values on different parts of their vast territory. The Chinese-populated ecumene was seen to be of greater value than the peripheral non-Han areas and, therefore, strategic considerations apart, most deserving as a recipient of governmental attention and largesse. Something of the sort

would appear appropriate now both in China and in other Asian countries. Given shortages of capital and other resources, some hard choices will have to be made if those parts of the country where pay-offs *vis-à-vis* development are likely to be greater are favored over the others. Almost certainly, those more favorable, and therefore to be favored, regions are the burgeoning and prospering extended metropolitan regions, which, parentheticall-ly, also are likely to be the principal generators of government income in any given country. There also is an international dimension to this proposition in that, in a few selected locations, trans-national development zones, that is incipient and potential urban agglomerations, are both conceivable and of interest, as in the case, for example, of the so-called Singapore-Johore-Riau development triangle, or perhaps in some trans-Taiwan Strait equivalent.

Since these expanding extended metropolitan spatial systems have been evolving for several decades it is remarkable that so little scholarly attention had been paid to them until recently. An intensive search of the literature reveals little systematic scholarly work among geographers and planners on them until the last several years. One of the first references to these evolving systems, or at least their prospective visibility and importance, appeared in a paper by this writer entitled "The Dispersed Metropolis: The Case of Okayama" delivered at a meeting of the Nihon Toshi Gakkai in Tokyo in 1960 and published in Japanese in the journal *Toshi Mondai* (Urban Problems) in June 1961, pp. 631-40. So far as can be determined, this was the first use of the term "dispersed metropolis," as indicated in the following quotation:

> The primary questions are whether it is still necessary to regard concentration and centrality as the basic preconditions for urban development and whether a high enough degree of interaction to be considered "urban" is possible without the same degree of concentration and centralization that now prevails. In other words, can the various functions that the city performs be separated from each other by considerable non-urban space and at the same time be integrated into a metropolitan unit?

> Instead of sub-centers joined together about a central core into a solid urban agglomeration, can one conceive of a system of sub-centers joined into an operational entity, separated from each other by a considerable amount of non-urban space?... It is my opinion that this type of development may be possible given the availability of modern technology. We may call it the "Dispersed Metropolis."

The ensuing discussion spells out at some length what the characteristics of such a spatial system might be, and it places major importance on the application of communication and transportation technologies to overcome the friction of distance. The hypothetical model was then applied to the Okayama Plain, and the structure of the system was spelled out in some detail. Also, since the paper was published only in Japanese, it had no effect outside of Japan itself, and its impact there was unclear as well.

A later unpublished paper, "The Development of a Japanese Megalopolis" presented at the annual meetings of the Association of American Geographers in 1964, built upon and expanded the basic thesis. A quotation from that paper is illustrative and relevant:

> In addition to natural increases and migration, a third factor also has contributed to the growth of urban population — the absorption of adjoining towns and villages as the larger cities have extended their urbanized areas. This factor reached exceptional importance between 1953 and 1956 when the number of civil divisions decreased by nearly two-thirds, and the number of officially designated cities increased by about 80 per cent from 380 in 1950 to 501 in 1956; by 1960 there were 556. Many of the new cities, called *noson toshi* or "agricultural village cities" had populations heavily dependent upon agriculture, although most of them were located on the fringes of the already existing large cities. In the past six years, however, the rate of agricultural employment in most of these places has declined, and their integration with the large cities' economies has proceeded rapidly as their employment composition has changed.

It may appear somewhat self-serving to refer to these papers, even though they were partial preliminaries to the 1969 paper under review, but the intention is to point out the comparative paucity of literature dealing with the urbanization and regional development issue some thirty years ago, until in the 1980's the basic studies of T.G. McGee and others happily began to appear, culminating in the collection published in the *Extended Metropolis* volume.

This is all the more remarkable since the phenomenon of the extended metropolis had for some considerable time been illustrated by the case of Hong Kong and the New Territories, familiar territory to a number of urbanists. As is well know, in 1950's the contrast between Hong Kong and the New Territories could not have been sharper; and when one moved out of Kowloon northward, it was into another world, a rural-village-based and agricultural world with seemingly little connection with the urbanized area around the port. In the 1960's, signs of greater connectivity appeared, and these vastly increased in numbers and intensity in the 1970's as the territories came increasingly under the cultural and economic influence of what was evolving into a great multi-functional metropolis. In due course, and surprisingly quickly, the rural territories became urbanized, though they retained many of their rural landscape characteristics, and the earlier divide between rural and urban became blurred and ultimately irrelevant. Indeed, what had come into being was the very model of an extended and dispersed metropolitan area. The implications of such a model for other areas in Asia were, on the whole, not perceived as such despite a substantial literature on the New Territories themselves. In retrospect this would appear to have been a great opportunity postponed, at least for a decade or more.

In any case, the forces that are at work in transforming the map of Asia and particularly the characteristics of its mega-cities and metropolitan regions, have a strong international and even global quality that might not have been forecast twenty-five years ago. These influences are well spelled out in the chapter by T.G.

McGee and Yue-man Yeung, "Urban Future for Pacific Asia: Towards the 21st Century," in Yue-man Yeung, editor, *Pacific Asia in the 21st Century* (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 1993), especially pp. 59-65. Although their discourse refers primarily to Pacific Asia, it may be applied with only modest reservations to all of Asian Asia. Among their stimulating generalizations is their emphasis on the importance of investment both national and international in the great port cities and their hinterlands, which constitute the impressive array of extended metropolitan systems that increasingly are characteristic of the urban regional landscapes in most Asian countries, including parenthetically those in South Asia as well as in Pacific Asia. These are recognized to be the major growth areas in most Asian countries, absorbing not only increasingly large percentages of national populations, but also generating ever larger proportions of national wealth. As a concomitant, these also are the geographical areas within which foreign capital seems to be concentrating, and much of that capital, they argue, is finance capital, in addition to more traditional merchant capital. One of the consequences is a kind of competition among the great cities for investment with emphasis on consumption and "spectacle," as illustrated by such activities as the Olympics, international conferences, and expositions. This surely is a kind of phenomenon that was not foreseen twenty-five years ago, and it marks the ever greater involvement of the extended metropolitan regions in the world political economy.

This does not mean a complete abandonment of more traditional urban forms associated with the ex-colonial cities and the dualism associated with them. What McGee and Yeung suggest, *inter alia*, is the evolution and maintenance of a dualistic urban structure for the central cities, in which there is a "higher order" pattern of financial institutions, hotels, high-rise housing, etc. overriding a "lower order" city of "squatter and low-income housing, open markets and small shops that still cater to low-income populations." They also note the persistence of poverty in the central cities associated with this lower order of things, and

the problems that government will continue to face in providing housing and other amenities for burgeoning populations. They give much emphasis to the importance of transportation and communication both within and without the central cities if the momentum of positive development is to be maintained.

The question remains open not only as to what kinds of urban systems are emerging in Asia, though much speculation and projection seems soundly based, but also as to what kinds of cities and their hinterlands will best serve the interests of the countries and societies concerned. These issues ought to be of major importance to scholars concerned with Asian urbanization and development. It seems certain that the urban systems evolving are distinctively Asian, despite major resemblances to those in the West. Yet, much more needs to be known about the processes at work and the problems that will continue to arise. For this reason, research on Asian urbanization will continue to be a fertile field for ever more intensive research by urban geographers and their colleagues in planning and other social sciences. In spite of the massive upsurge of interest and effort in dealing with these matters, much of what appears in the literature is highly speculative. If policy makers in the countries concerned are to be provided with sound bases for action, more — indeed much more — needs to be known about the processes and forces at work. The challenge is there; the means for acquiring the needed knowledge is basically available, though the practitioners of those means are all too few. Here is a mission for the universities both in Asia and the West of unparalleled importance to two-thirds of humankind.

Note

1. Readers interested in further discussions of urbanization and modernization may be interested in two essays by this writer. First, "The City and Modernization," in M. Weiner, ed. *Modernization and Dynamics of Growth* (New York: Basic Books, 1966); and "The Changing Meaning of Modernization in Southeast Asia," in K. Sandhu and P. Wheatley, eds. *Melaka* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1983).

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規劃亞洲城市的將來

二十五年的回顧

Norton Ginsburg

（中文摘要）

本文回顧了一篇二十五年前發表的論文迄今的發展情況，該論文宣讀於一九六九年香港舉行的一個研討會上，並於一九七二年印行。隨着該研討會之主題的展開，城市化作為現代化的主要動力，以及亞洲的大城市擔當着「發展的火車頭」這兩項觀點，受到大會的普遍關注，但這些觀點在當時並不流行。該文同時指出，為亞洲城市化進行規劃，不能只將注意力集中在大城市，也要顧及它們的腹地，因為正如該文所揭示一樣，兩者正日益融合在一起。此等論據在過去二十五年的發展中都得到證實，大城市與其腹地之間的互動愈來愈廣泛，結果形成了現時所稱的「擴大或分佈式大都會」的現象，此現象是由亞洲地區的高速經濟發展所造成，實為亞洲所獨有。本文亦對未來的研究路向提出若干建議。